



Mefloquine Tablets (Anti-Malarial Medication)

What You Need to Know

Deployment Medication Information Sheets (DMIS) are provided by the U.S. Army Center for Health Promotion and Preventive Medicine (USACHPPM). Written for soldiers and their families, they provide basic information on deployment medications that are intended as guidance only; consult your health care provider for more information.

What is mefloquine?

Mefloquine tablets are one of several types of drugs used to prevent malaria. The type of drug prescribed by your health care provider will be based on the area of the world you are traveling to and your medical condition.

What is malaria?

Malaria is a serious, but preventable parasitic disease, spread by the bite of an infected mosquito. Symptoms may include shivering followed by high fever, which may be accompanied by confusion, headache, and vomiting. If not treated, symptoms can recur at irregular intervals for many years.

How do I take the tablets?

- Take with food or milk.
- Take this medication as prescribed for full course of treatment.
- It is important that you not miss any doses and that you take the drug on a regularly scheduled basis.
- Store at room temperature away from sunlight and moisture.
- Do not share this medication with others.
- Do not donate blood for 3 years after taking it.

What does the military require?

Mefloquine may be required for duty or deployment in areas where there is a risk of contracting malaria. The use of this anti-malarial medication will be based on the degree and length of exposure and the prevalence of drug resistant strains of the disease in the area(s) of travel and an individual's health status.

Are there any side effects?

- You may have an upset stomach, stomach pain, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, headache, insomnia, or lightheadedness. These effects should subside as your body adjusts to the medication. If these symptoms persist or become severe, inform your health care provider.
- This medication may cause dizziness or restlessness. Use caution when driving or engaging in activities requiring alertness.
- Call your health care provider if you develop unexplained anxiety, mood changes, depression, restlessness, or confusion.
- If you experience any allergic reactions such as flushing, itching, skin rash, breathing difficulties, or vision problems, stop taking the medication and contact your health care provider.

Is there any reason I shouldn't take mefloquine?

- Tell your health care provider or pharmacist your medical history including any psychiatric disorders, heart or liver problems, seizure disorders, and allergies you may have, especially allergies to other drugs.
- Tell your health care provider if you are taking any beta-blocker (propranolol), chloroquine, quinine, quinidine, or valproic acid.
- Some vaccines may not work if given while you are taking mefloquine. You may need to finish taking your vaccines at least 3 days before starting mefloquine.

What if I'm pregnant or breast-feeding?

- This medication should be used only when clearly needed during pregnancy. Discuss the risks and benefits with your health care provider.
- This drug is excreted into breast milk. Consult with your health care provider before breast-feeding.

What should I do if I miss a dose?

If you miss a dose for any reason, take the missed dose as soon as possible and then continue the usual dosing schedule. Do NOT "double-up" on doses.

You *can* avoid getting malaria!

- Eliminate mosquito-breeding sites by emptying water collected in outdoor containers or debris.
- Remain in well-screened areas, particularly at dawn, dusk, and early evening when mosquitoes are most active.
- Use mosquito nets.
- Wear loose clothing that covers most of the body.
- Bed nets and tents can also be soaked in or sprayed with permethrin.
- For optimum protection, permethrin treated clothing should be worn with DEET repellents on exposed skin.
- It is also important to consider the use of insect repellent when traveling in environments with biting insects. The repellent should be applied to any exposed areas of the skin. The most effective compound is DEET (N,N- diethylmetatoluamide), an ingredient in most insect repellents.

Be sure your medical record shows that you have received this medication.

Where can I get more information?

- Health care provider at your military treatment facility.
- CDC Specific Disease web site (for malaria): www.cdc.gov/health/diseases.htm
- Lariam Medication Guide available at: www.rocheusa.com/products/lariam/lariam_medguide.pdf

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